

Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Alexander Graham Bell, June 10, 1895, with transcript

Letter from Mrs. Alexander Graham Bell to Dr. Alexander Graham Bell. Convent et Externat, de l' Assomption, 10 rue Nitot, June 10th 1895. My dear Alec:

The concierge brought us up a letter from Mamma and a note from Mr. McCurdy, but nothing from you. Mr. McCurdy says no letters had been received from me. I don't understand because Mamma has replied to letters from me for over a week now, and I have written you by the same mails. I am so sorry you have had to wait so long for letters from me, but it isn't my fault. I hope you think you get enough, and not too many now. The poor little girls haven't heard from their cousins since the letter you sent on, and they are getting impatient. I was rather glad at first that the correspondence seemed slacking, but I think now it is quite time the cousins remembered Elsie and Daisy. I am quite willing my daughters should drop the boys, but the boys dropping them is quite another matter.

Disappointment however is not preying on the children's spirits. They both seem perfectly content and bright, and not anxious to be anywhere else or in any other company. They are both very affectionate and seem to like being with me. My opinion of my own knowledge begins to increase, for Elsie pumps me all day long and all night long, when she has a chance, and she rarely finds me dry. I really think I must know more than I thought I did, even of the French language.

We three went to the Salon of the Champs de Mars, and found it after some hunting. It is far more decent and less gruesome than the other, but makes up for its moderation in those respects 2 by running mad on color. It is "impressionist" to the last degree, and resembles nothing so much as Bedlam broken loose among the color pots. We could not make out the subject of our picture definitely. It was blotches of vivid blues and reds and greens. I think it was a view of the sea dashing against blue cliffs, but could not be sure.

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Then there was a most wonderful picture of a yellow woman tumbling over a red waterfall. The foreshortening of the naked yellow figure was very well done, I would like to know how the painter got any model to remain in that position five minutes. The portraits were crazy beyond belief and altogether I could only walk through the immense galleries and wonder where art was coming to. There were of course some fine pictures among all the rubbish, one powerful one called "Abandoned" before which we first noticed half a dozen deaf and dumb boys from the Institution gesticulating. Elsie kept saying what alpity it was you were not there to talk to them. They were bright looking, and one at least of them could talk although very slowly, for he was interpreting between his fellows and the guide. I think perhaps the best and sanest picture I saw was one by Miss Nourse the American lady I went to see the other Sunday. What do you think of my having Elsie painted if I can find an artist to my liking? I haven't yet, but have not yet been through either of the Salons, and have not given either a careful study, so may find some portraits I like after all.

Mamma writes that Mr. and Mrs. Pollok are here, and I will call on them tomorrow.

I don't seem to have anything more to say. Mr. McCurdy writes that you are waited on by Maggie and her niece and Duncan. Do they look after you both properly, I don't believe in economizing to the point of discomfort.

I Love you, Your own, May. I think it was awfully nice in you to give Mr. McCurdy his camera, and am very glad also to hear that that match box was "lost"! I am so glad it isn't around among your things. To console you I will try and send you a picture of the bicycle girl. They are blazoning the dead walls all over Paris.